

**Chief Forester Order  
Respecting an AAC Determination  
For Tree Farm Licence No. 30**

Section 8 (3.1) of the *Forest Act* stipulates in part that

*If ... the chief forester considers that the allowable annual cut ... is not likely to be changed significantly with a new determination ... the chief forester ... by written order may postpone the next [allowable annual cut] determination ... to a date that is up to 10 years after the date of the relevant last determination, and ... must give written reasons for the postponement".*

In accordance with Section 23(3) of the *Interpretation Act*, the deputy chief forester is expressly authorised to carry out the functions of the chief forester, which include those required under Section 8 of the *Forest Act*. I, the deputy chief forester, have considered the factors described below and order the postponement of the allowable annual cut (AAC) determination for the reasons noted in this document.

In considering whether to postpone the next allowable annual cut (AAC) determination for Tree Farm Licence No. 30 (TFL 30) held by Canadian Forest Products Ltd. (the Licensee):

- I note that the most recent AAC determination for TFL 30 was made on July 1, 2003. The deputy chief forester determined the AAC to be 330 000 cubic metres.
- I have reviewed the letter provided by the licensee dated April 4, 2006 requesting that the AAC determination for TFL 30 be postponed to July 1, 2013, which is ten years after the date of the relevant last determination.
  - In the letter the Licensee indicated that the analysis assumptions used for the last AAC determination for TFL 30 have not changed significantly.
  - The licensee further noted that there is little merchantable pine in the TFL so the mountain pine beetle infestation will not significantly affect timber supply.
- I have reviewed the factors that were considered sources of uncertainty in the 2003 AAC determination. Since that determination the available information for these factors has not changed to the extent that it would affect the short-term timber supply for TFL 30.
- One factor, patch size distribution, carried considerable weight in the 2003 AAC determination. In the base case used for that determination the patch size distributions outlined in the Landscape Unit Planning Guide were applied. Guidelines for natural disturbance units of the (former) Prince George Forest Region recommend larger patch sizes in some areas of the TFL. When patch size requirements are removed, a sensitivity analysis showed a harvest level of 350 000 cubic metres per year could be maintained for 30 years to the year 2031, followed by a reduction to 310 000 cubic metres from 2032 to 2046. After that the forecast increased in several steps to the long-term harvest level. In his determination the deputy chief forester accepted this forecast as more representative of current practice

than the base case. In order to reduce the projected mid-term timber supply deficit, he reduced the AAC from 350 000 cubic metres to 330 000 cubic metres.

- I have investigated each factor specified under Section 8 of the *Forest Act* and no new information exists that would affect short-term timber supply on TFL 30. Most notably:
  - The March 2006 MoFR report “*Summary of dead potential volume estimates for units within the Northern and Southern Forest Regions*” indicates that Natural Stand Yield Tables (NSYT’s) used in the last determination may be underestimated by up to 3.3 percent because they did not include estimates of merchantable dead potential volume.
  - Predictive habitat maps are now available for Caribou, Grizzly Bear, Wolverine and Fisher. This information will be used by the Licensee to improve its management of species at risk and may be incorporated in the information for the next determination.
  - SARCO is working on Caribou recovery plans. The outcome of these plans will be incorporated into the next timber supply analysis.
  - In the year 2000 less than 4% of the merchantable timber volume was pine. Since then the Licensee has harvested this volume so mountain pine beetle is not expected to affect short-term timber supply.
- I am aware of the Province’s legal obligation stemming from court decisions to consult First Nations on proposed decisions concerning various forest management matters. I have reviewed the information obtained through the First Nations consultation process undertaken by the Ministry of Forests and Range (MOFR) with the First Nations whose asserted traditional territories and treaty lands overlap with TFL 30.
  - The Lheidli T’enneh First Nation, McLeod Lake First Nation, and West Moberly First Nation were identified as having asserted traditional territories and treaty lands that overlap with TFL 30. The McLeod Lake First Nation and the West Moberly First Nation are signatories to Treaty 8.
  - I have reviewed the consultation process followed and I am not aware of aboriginal interests or treaty rights that may be affected by the postponement of the AAC determination. However, if any new information does arise, then I will consider it in the next determination which I may make sooner than the timeframe I indicate below

I am aware that under section 61 of the *Forest Act* the minister reduced the AAC authorized for the TFL area to 201 312 cubic metres for the period January 1, 2003 to December 31, 2008. I will not speculate on the possible disposition of the total volume of timber comprised in the reduction allowed for under section 61(3) of the *Forest Act*. If it is not disposed of, then mid-term timber supply will be improved compared to the base case projection. If it is disposed of, then I have accounted for it in this decision.

In the rationale for the 2003 AAC determination the deputy chief forester made specific requests to the Licensee to address factors that were highly uncertain. I note with concern that these have not been completed to date. I request that the Licensee address

these issues so that the best possible information may be incorporated into the next timber supply review.

I include the following additional instructions for the next determination:

- I request that the Licensee review the estimates of dead potential volume specific to TFL 30 and that it monitor and report performance on harvesting this dead wood.
- I request that by July 1, 2011 the licensee provide me with a work plan that includes a schedule for completing the timber supply review and details the status of initiatives and availability of the improved information requested above.

Having reviewed the critical issues and the currently available information, I have determined that the AAC for TFL 30 is not likely to be changed significantly with a new determination made according to the existing schedule. Although mid-term timber supply may decrease, I find the projected level and duration to be reasonable. Under the authority of Section 8(3.1) of the *Forest Act*, I hereby postpone the next AAC determination for TFL 30 to no later than July 1, 2013, which is ten years after the date of the last relevant AAC determination.

I am authorized to rescind this order under Section 8(3.2) of the *Forest Act* if I conclude that circumstances on the TFL that influence timber supply have changed significantly during the interim. I will also rescind this order if any new issues arise concerning First Nations that may impact timber supply.



Craig Sutherland, R.P.F.  
Deputy Chief Forester

Date *October 30, 2007*

